

TIDEWATER COMMUNITY COLLEGE

COMPREHENSIVE FIVE-YEAR CURRICULUM PLAN

2003-08

During the 2002-03 academic year, Tidewater Community College initiated a curriculum planning process involving extensive study and deliberation within the institution and broad-based consultation with community stakeholders, including a review of regional workforce needs by ten industry focus groups convened by the college in February 2003. As a result, five major principles and corresponding strategies have been identified to guide curriculum planning at the college in the coming years. For seven programmatic areas—Arts, Business and Information Technology, Health Professions, Hospitality, Manufacturing and Industrial Technology, Public Services, and Transfer Education—the plan reviews overall prospects and puts forward specific proposals to be pursued. In addition, the plan discusses six related areas in which the college seeks to develop distinctive strengths—Civic Engagement, Developmental Education, Distributed Teaching and Learning, General Education, Honors, and International Education—all of which closely connect with and influence specific programmatic and overall curriculum development.

Annual reports will be produced to account for what has been accomplished in enhancing current programs and implementing new ones, and to identify emerging developments that call for updates to the curriculum planning process.

PRINCIPLES AND STRATEGIES FOR CURRICULUM PLANNING

Curriculum planning at Tidewater Community College will occur in accord with the following principles:

1. The college's curriculum will be *comprehensive*, reflecting the full range of programmatic offerings appropriate for a community college that serves as a national exemplar in pursuit of its two-pronged mission of preparing students to successfully complete the baccalaureate degree and to obtain occupational/technical education and training leading directly to productive careers.
2. The curriculum will be structured and articulated in ways that provide students with *multiple opportunities for connection and advancement* as they enter, progress through, exit, and potentially return to the college.
3. The curriculum will be *responsive* to the distinctive needs of business, industry, government, agencies, and the larger community, continually reinventing itself in

relation to the immediate requests and long-term developments in various occupational and technical fields.

4. The curriculum will be *developed in consultation with employers and transfer institutions* that are the direct recipients of graduates.
5. All curricula will be built and maintained on a *foundation of excellence*. “In the college transfer area, the college will benchmark itself to the most rigorous standards of achievement in four-year baccalaureate degree-granting institutions. In the fields of occupational-technical study, the college will look to business and benchmark its performance goals to the standards of the relevant industries themselves” (*Bearings on the Future: The Tidewater Community College Strategic Plan*).

As a means of ensuring adherence to these principles, the college will pursue the following corresponding strategies:

1. The college will regularly review programming at peer community colleges across the nation with the goal of identifying current and emerging curricular areas for possible development and implementation. As resources permit, faculty and administrative teams will make site visits to institutions whose curricular offerings have been identified as having benchmark status, bringing back model programs and practices for adaptation and implementation at TCC.
2. To facilitate connections and advancement for students, the college will use such means as advanced standing through articulation and Tech Prep, dual enrollment, Advanced Placement, and Middle College; clear internal and external curricular pathways for career laddering; opportunities for enhancing education with work experiences through internships and cooperative education as well as preparing for industry certifications; and transfer agreements with four-year colleges and universities.
3. Through focus groups, advisory committees, and other means of formal and informal relationships with employers and the higher education community, the college will actively solicit input for needed program enhancements and development as well as communicate the range and availability of existing programs.
4. The college will actively partner with those who are the primary stakeholders in the successful outcome of students, looking for ways to engage their support and sponsorship of students throughout the learning process.
5. The college will put into place a systematic process for assessing programmatic and student learning outcomes, the results from which will be used for continuous improvement of disciplines and programs. Other college activities,

processes, and initiatives (e.g., faculty hiring, adjunct faculty initiative, accreditation, professional development and renewal, budget development, grant proposals, major gifts campaign) will be aligned with the pursuit of curricular excellence.

PROGRAMMATIC AREAS

Based on what is known as of 2003, overall prospects have been reviewed for selected programmatic areas and specific proposals set forth.

ARTS: VISUAL AND PERFORMING

The college's well-received art programs, offered through the Visual Arts Center in Olde Towne Portsmouth, will continue to build on the core strengths of providing solid training in basic artistic skills, regardless of area of specialization, and of operating as a freestanding urban arts center serving regional needs as part of a multi-campus community college.

The college will continue to invest in resources to support the highly successful recent addition to its curriculum, Multimedia as a specialization of Graphic Design. In order to remain current with rapidly evolving programmatic developments, Photography will increasingly incorporate digital technologies and explore ways to offer online instruction. Fine Arts will be restructured into a new Associate in Applied Arts degree structure, which will better enable students in such areas as painting and sculpture to build the portfolios required for either immediate employment or admission to advanced fine arts programs. Art History will transition to a digital form of image delivery, which will make it possible to extend programming to the campuses. The area of Crafts will continue expansion. The opening of the glass blowing studio adds a distinctive, indeed unique, dimension to programmatic offerings in Crafts. Other areas for addition in Crafts include jewelry and fiber arts. Overall, in cooperation with area studios, galleries, and museums, the visual arts programs will expand opportunities for students to participate in experiential learning activities.

In the performing arts, the college will continue to build on the foundation of its emerging Theatre Arts program. The Performance Theatre specialization will be complemented by investments in Technical Theatre. The Theatre Arts program will increase its presence on all campuses; strengthen its linkages with schools, universities, and theatre companies; and intensify its efforts to work with area businesses and agencies in developing role-play scenarios and other performance-based strategies for staff training and development.

The college will add new dimensions to performing arts by additions in Dance and Music, both in traditional and popular forms. The base of operations for these offerings will be the Norfolk Campus, where the TCC Jeanne and George Roper Performing Arts

Center is located and where there are nearby venues for dance and music. The college will pursue partnerships with major arts organizations to leverage the considerable artistic resources present in Hampton Roads for the development and delivery of programmatic offerings across campuses.

BUSINESS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

The college will continue to expand its efforts to provide training to a variety of business and industries in such areas as banking, finance, customer service, advertising, human relations, retail operations, accounting, and small business management. Usually, the training will be packaged in readily developed Career Studies Certificates of under 30 credits. Both employers and students have indicated interest in using this training foundation as the opportunity for advancement into managerial and supervisory roles. To accommodate this need, the college proposes to develop an Associate in Applied Science Degree in Supervision and Leadership. Based on the already existing model of Technical Studies, the degree program in Supervision and Leadership will have a general education component, a foundation series of courses focusing on supervision and leadership, and then a core of business-related content drawn from Career Studies Certificates in areas such as those mentioned above. Also included will be appropriate internships or paid work experiences that reinforce the academic and business content. The college will work closely with the appropriate employers in these businesses to design programs that are appropriate for their particular needs.

The college will continue with what have proven to be ongoing successful efforts to keep its programmatic offerings in Information Technology aligned with the overall development of IT applications, current with vendor releases, and responsive to the immediate and emerging needs of regional businesses and industries. With the opening of the Advanced Technology Center in the 2002-03 academic year, the college has classroom and laboratory facilities as well as computer equipment that place it at the forefront in the development and delivery of IT-related instructional programs. Equally important, the ATC provides a point of focus for establishing and strengthening relationships with both school systems and employers to see that the region has the sophisticated IT workforce that will serve as a technological engine for economic development. The development of a skilled IT workforce is understood by the Hampton Roads Partnership, Workforce Investment Board, and other such entities as the indispensable foundation of strategic efforts to position Hampton Roads as a technology center able to fully thrive in a 21st century economy. Regardless of short-term boom-and-burst cycles in the dot-com arena and corresponding fluctuations in technology-related enrollments, the long-term outlook for IT workforce remains strong. Indeed, the most recent *Occupational Outlook Handbook* published by the U.S. Department of Labor lists seven IT-related career fields among the top ten in those occupations projected to grow the fastest in the first decade of the 21st century. The industry focus group on Information Technology, convened by the college in February 2003, affirmed the currency and comprehensiveness of the college's curriculum while recommending that it expand efforts to build relationships with IT vendors, begin new programs for

emerging areas (e.g., Microsoft Visualization Studio.Net, combined phone and computer systems), and provide meaningful work-based opportunities through internships and comparable experiences that would set TCC students apart from those who only had certifications. Given these larger realities, it is imperative for the college to continue to make IT programming a focal point of its curriculum development efforts and to ensure that the resources in terms of faculty, professional development, facilities, equipment, and relationships/partnerships are provided to support these efforts.

HEALTH PROFESSIONS

Through its program in the Health Professions, the college provides education and training in a number of specialized areas that are vital to the fundamental well being of the citizens of Hampton Roads. In no other area is the college's impact upon the region's quality of life more immediately and deeply felt than in preparing the nurses, paramedics, radiographers, and therapists and assistants in various fields who provide direct care and critical support for those in medical need. The demand for substantially increasing the workforce in the Health Professions has been identified in numerous national reports; this need has been confirmed for the Hampton Roads area by the industry focus group convened by the college. Given the extensive resources (full-time faculty, facilities, equipment, clinical sites and supervision, accreditation requirements) required for preparation of individuals in the health professions, the college should seek to partner with area hospitals and other health care providers to secure the funding and other assistance needed to support programs and expand their capacity. One instance of such partnering begun in the 2002-03 year has allowed the high-demand Radiography program to increase capacity by 25 percent.

Of particular importance for the area's health care workforce is the need to increase the number of students successfully completing the associate degree Registered Nursing program. The number of awards over the past five years has averaged 65. Within the next three years, the number should exceed 100. This will be accomplished by concerted efforts (1) to recruit and admit a greater number of well qualified students; (2) to retain program students by providing interventions at vulnerable points for their success; (3) to put into place a Paramedic-to-RN bridge program that allows students already well-trained in a number of key areas to receive advanced standing and complete RN requirements in an abbreviated period. In addition, the college will put into place a Licensed Practical Nursing (LPN) program that will meet immediate workforce needs while providing a pool of students who are ready to advance rapidly towards completion of RN requirements. The college will also seek to expand its capacity to train Certified Nursing Assistants, who are in high demand in health care facilities and who also constitute a pool of those ready to advance to LPN and then RN status.

In planning for the Regional Center for the Health Professions as part of the capital construction plan for the Virginia Beach Campus, the college will continue to assess the relevance and responsiveness of all of its current programs in the Health Professions: Diagnostic Medical Sonography, Dietetics, Emergency Medical Services, Gerontology,

Health Information Technology, Medical Assisting, Nursing, Occupational Therapy Assisting, Physical Therapy Assisting, Radiography, and Respiratory Therapy. New programs to be considered for addition to the college's curricular offerings include Cardiac Catheterization, Coding Specialist, Critical Care Nursing, Peripheral Vascular Technology, Polysomnography (sleep disorders), and Surgical Technician.

HOSPITALITY

The college has the opportunity to position itself as the premier provider of the workforce for Culinary Arts and Hospitality Management in Hampton Roads. The college already has a degree program in Culinary Arts and two industrial kitchens located on the Norfolk Campus that will serve as the foundation for an enhanced program to train chefs for the region. In addition, a degree program in Hospitality Management, with specializations in Food Service Management and Lodging Management, is offered at the Virginia Beach Campus. The college will move towards an Institute for Culinary Arts and Hospitality Services that will strategically link the resources of these two programs to meet the general hospitality and culinary needs of the region. Such programmatic coordination will serve as a framework for pursuit of several basic strategies: (1) establish credibility with area employers in these fields through better use of the Curriculum Advisory Committee, forming and maintaining personal and professional contacts in the industry, and incorporating work-based learning into these programs; (2) structure the programs to better serve the needs of the students by flexible, job-related scheduling, to include internships/cooperative education, and provide clearly defined career pathways for advancement; (3) add a demonstration dining room/lab at the Norfolk Campus staffed and operated by students in Culinary Arts and Hospitality Management; and (4) pursue accreditation for the Culinary Arts program from the American Culinary Federation. The college will also seek to partner with corresponding upper-level programs at Norfolk State University, Old Dominion University, and Hampton University. Additional components for development in the programmatic area recommended by the industry focus group are events planning/management and tourism.

MANUFACTURING AND INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGY

The college will pursue development of programs for niche markets and specialized applications in response to defined corporate customer needs as has recently been done in advanced Manufacturing Technology with Stihl and other participating companies. The college will consolidate its initiatives with the ship repair/construction industry through enhancement and development of programming related to such areas as welding, shipfitting, pipefitting, machining, electromechanical controls, marine electrical, marine heating and ventilation systems, and marine diesel engine repair. In view of the region's burgeoning warehouse industry, the college will provide appropriate programming in distribution management. Likewise, with significant port expansion projected, the college will pursue programming in marine logistics, focusing on such areas as the need for training in software and processes required to move cargo, both

in the U.S. and internationally; maritime security issues; ports management; and logistics technician.

The planning for the regional Automotive and Workforce Development Center, based at the Chesapeake Campus, provides the opportunity to focus on development of curriculum aligned with industry movement towards hybrid vehicles and alternative fuels as well as towards intensive use of technologies for Geographical Information Systems and Global Positioning Systems.

PUBLIC SERVICES

The federal No Child Left Behind legislation has put focus on the importance of early childhood education. The college has successfully partnered with Norfolk Public Schools to use the well-established Early Childhood program as a pathway for teacher aides to obtain required academic credentials and to advance in their careers. The college will seek to partner with other regional school systems in using this model for employee development.

The college seeks to respond to the national, state, and local demands for homeland security education and training post September 11, 2001, through a variety of strategies. The college will work with regional first responders to provide training identified by the national Homeland Security Initiative and the Secure Virginia Initiative. This effort will identify methods that would allow for regional jurisdictions to come together for entry-level first responder training in addition to the more advanced training required by special response teams. The college will also focus on the development of a curriculum that will assist business and industry, especially small businesses, in emergency plan development, which includes evacuation and recovery techniques. In addition, the college will develop homeland security training for the local civilian population. This training will help prepare the community to deal with the potentially catastrophic impact of future terrorist activity. As follow-up to an in-depth review of the Fire Science curriculum in close consultation with the curriculum advisory committee, the college is redirecting the focus of the program to leadership development in general and homeland security training in particular. The Administration of Justice curriculum will undergo similar review to determine if its present structure and scope of offerings effectively meets regional needs.

TRANSFER EDUCATION

The college will continue to develop general transfer agreements and specific program articulation arrangements with four-year colleges and universities. In addition to provisions for students in transfer degree programs (Associate in Arts and Associate in Science), the college will work with senior institutions to provide clearly defined and well-supported pathways for students in occupational/technical programs to pursue the baccalaureate degree. Given the critical nature of the teacher shortage, the college will give particular attention to ensuring seamless transfer for students who wish to pursue a

career in K-12 education. In conjunction with a statewide initiative, the college will also provide the training needed for “career switchers,” individuals who already have a bachelor’s degree and wish to redirect their careers to teaching in the public schools.

The college will pursue a special arrangement with the University of Virginia’s School of Continuing and Professional Studies to offer the adult-degree Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies program to qualifying TCC students on a TCC campus. This arrangement will provide a distinctive option for selected TCC transfer students.

DIMENSIONS OF DISTINCTION

The college seeks to develop distinctive strengths in the following areas, each of which will have wide-ranging impact across various programs and the curriculum as a whole.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Realizing the college’s core value of creating a vital and engaging learning environment means “instilling in students not just a knowledge of a particular subject but a broader sense of responsibility for one’s own achievement, as well as a responsibility to others as citizens and human beings” (*Bearings on the Future: The Tidewater Community College Strategic Plan*). Building on its close association with the National and Virginia Campus Compact, the service learning initiative of the American Association of Community Colleges, and the successful three-year grant (The Urban Experience: A Model for Building Community Capacity Through Integrated Service Learning) funded by the Corporation for National Service, the college will continue its efforts to incorporate service learning into courses and promote other opportunities for students to assume civic responsibility by becoming involved in their communities and engaged in deliberations about issues of major social and political import. As recognized in a recent publication from the League for Innovation in the Community College, fostering the role of community service is a major strategy that community colleges should pursue in their efforts to respond to needs for training and education related to homeland security.

DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION

Bearings on the Future: The Tidewater Community College Strategic Plan recognizes that “in many respects, developmental education is the most critical link to the successful fulfillment of the college’s educational mission” and therefore commits the institution to “strengthen the effectiveness of its developmental education program, taking more of a college-wide approach to ensuring that students attain the skills in math, composition, and reading needed to succeed in their courses of study.” As a recipient of a Strengthening Institutions Program (Title III) grant, descriptively entitled “Creating the Conditions for Successful Student Achievement: Improving and Linking Developmental Programs and Student Services,” the college has significant resources

over a five-year period (2002-07) to improve and integrate the varied services and practices on the campuses into a cohesive and comprehensive developmental education program. With special attention to learning assistance through supplemental instruction and a dedicated website, and to overall college success skills, the program will better serve the students' learning needs and become a model for effective developmental education.

DISTRIBUTED TEACHING AND LEARNING

Offerings through distributed teaching and learning, particularly online courses, are becoming an increasing part of the college's instructional program. The growth is partly driven by the desire and need of students for the flexible, convenient, and supportive educational opportunities available to them through a distributed environment. It is also driven by fundamental changes that are occurring in the way that information is transmitted and accessed, and therefore in the way that instruction can most effectively and creatively be delivered and received. As increasing portions of the curriculum become available in a distributed mode, the college needs to ensure that faculty have the required course management capabilities and the instructional design/technology support required for quality offerings, and that students have access to requisite services, such as testing centers on all campus, orientation learning modules, technical support, and a TCC portal interface.

GENERAL EDUCATION

The centrality of the college's general education program is recognized in *Bearings on the Future: The Tidewater Community College Strategic Plan*, which affirms the commitment "to providing students with a foundation of knowledge that extends beyond a particular field or skill set" and to ensuring that they "experience the contributions that different fields of inquiry have made to human understanding." In a related matter, employers represented in the industry focus groups convened by the college were unanimous in stating the importance of general or "soft" skills as a critical need for all graduates—what might be thought of as an applied form of a portion of what is traditionally regarded as collegiate general education:

In practical terms, when employers discuss soft skills, they refer to skills in the following areas: problem solving, communication (reading for comprehension, listening, speaking, business writing), teamwork, interpersonal, and the ability to manage time and stress. In addition, employers need individuals who can respond to an ever-changing work environment in an adaptable and flexible manner. These qualities are usually missing among today's young recruits.

Given that there has been no major review of general education at the college or within the Virginia Community College System for well over a decade, the college will undertake such a review to ensure that the program is appropriate to the core values

and strategic goals of TCC, the norms of higher education, the expectations of employers, and the needs of students.

HONORS

Greater opportunities for what traditionally has been regarded as honors work need to be available to TCC students who can benefit from the challenge of intense study of selected topics within the framework of a structured program of scholarship. Pockets of such activity are currently available, but the effort needs to be more systematic through the development of a clearly defined program that models the best of academic study and the collegiate experience in the first two years of baccalaureate education for selected cohorts of students.

INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

Following up on strategies for advancing international education that emerged from participation in the American Council on Education “Promising Practices” project, the college will focus renewed attention on projects that promote the internationalization of the curriculum. Specific efforts will include consideration of global competencies in relation to both general education and specific programs; an expansion of the scope of foreign language instruction; greater opportunities for study and service abroad; and enhancement of services to international students.